Report of the Director

Middlebury Spanish School

1955

I am herewith submitting a report on the significant features of the 1955 session of the Spanish School. First of all I want to point out the happy atmosphere prevalent during the session. The cordial rapport among the students and the faculty from both the academic and the social point of view has made this session a most successful one. I am grateful to the fine student body and to the whole Faculty, and specially to our visiting professors. It is true that Prof. Mañach belongs to the best tradition of our school, and Prof. Llorens has adapted himself so perfectly during his first year that I consider it advisable to keep him in mind for future times.

The total enrollment of the school was 152 to which is to be added a number of auditors. This means an increase of 17 students, and I hope that the decline of previous years is ended.

One of the things to be remarked upon is the presence in our Summer School of students of the School in Spain who are better acquainted with Spanish modalities and spirit. They have contributed to raising the enthusiasm with their knowledge of songs, dances, instruments, and their mastery of the language, especially helpful in their friendship with their other fellow students.

The same balance between curricular and extracurricular activities has to be kept in the future. The idea of offering two weeks of class dances has been very welcome to the students, and I advize that it be continued during the next session. The person in charge, Srta. Teresita Osta, has fulfilled her task in the best possible way. I consider the knowledge of songs and dances a part of the training for future teachers of Spanish in order to prepare them for extracurricular activities such as the direction of Spanish clubs in schools and colleges.

I point out the contribution of the Spanish School at the Amity Field Day with their XVIIth century Spanish songs (very ably directed by Prof. Roberto Ruiz) and their Spanish and Latin American dances (directed by Miss Osta).

The theatrical activities have been maintained at the usual high level with the aim of mixing pleasure and educational purposes. The school has managed to overcome the lack of a theater with performances at night in the garden of Hepburn. The relevant fact this year has been that the Faculty has offered a play by the great writer Miguel de Unamuno, a play almost unknown, performed in Spain in 1926. Ours has been, as far as I know, the second performance. The same night the students performed themselves a fragment of a play by Federico García Lorca, a dramatic unity in itself, and the Faculty had to make an effort to follow the level established by the students. The person in charge of the theatrical activities will not be available for the next session, and we must think of another person. I judge this will be difficult, for not many will accept the compensation offered this year.

As in previous years a gift was received from the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese consisting of a medal to be awarded to a distinguished student. The Faculty voted to award it to Mrs. Ann Dash. But considering that this year a single distinction was not enough, we have offered to two more students, Miss Mary Bull and Mr. Frank Young, copies of a book signed by the whole faculty, the book being "Ten Centuries of Spanish Poetry" by Miss Eleanor Turnbull. Many of these poems have been translated in Middlebury with the advice of our teachers. The book is in part a Middlebury production, as has been recognized by the press, and we wanted to associate Miss Turnbull with this act of distributing the awards. This act closed the activities of our school.

The school has to confront several problems concerning the Doctoral dissertations and the teaching of phonetics, but since this is the report of the closing session of 1955, maybe this is not the proper moment to present them.

The cordial and efficient collaboration of Dean Guarnaccia, as well as the cooperation of the administration have made my first year as Director not only an easy task but a real pleasure.

Respectfully submitted,

Francisco García Lorca

Francisco García Lorca
Director
Spanish School